



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Steve Hillebrand

### Don't Feed Bears

To prevent human-bear conflicts caused by bears seeking out human-provided food, DEC recently announced a new regulation prohibiting the intentional and direct feeding of black bears. The regulation also prohibits, after written notice from DEC, the incidental or indirect feeding of black bears through food attractants such as garbage or bird seed. Additionally, DEC generally recommends stopping bird-feeding activities in the spring when bears are emerging from dens and natural foods for birds are more abundant. To read about the new regulation, visit [www.dec.ny.gov/regulations/71580.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/regulations/71580.html), and visit [www.dec.ny.gov/animals/6960.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/6960.html) to read more about black bears.

### Be Firewise

April 18-24 is National Wildfire Awareness Week. During this week, DEC will promote safe practices with outdoor fires like campfires, promote the prevention of forest fires, and work with the Firewise Communities program. The Firewise program is designed for homeowners, community leaders, planners, local government officials and firefighters to take a proactive approach in identifying property risks associated with wildfire, as well as how to protect against such risks. You can read more about Firewise by visiting the "Firewise New York" page on DEC's website at [www.dec.ny.gov/public/42524.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/public/42524.html). Also, visit [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7827.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7827.html) to learn more about fire safety and read tips for safe burning practices. Open



burning of residential waste is the single largest cause of wildfires in New York. In 2009, DEC extended restrictions on open burning to prohibit the practice in all communities state-wide, regardless of population size, with certain exceptions, including burning tree limbs and branches at limited times of the year. During last year's eight-week ban period (March 16 to May 14, 2010), the new regulation resulted in a 33 percent decrease in wildfires caused by debris burning.

### Bear Crossing Signs

DEC recently worked with the NYS Department of Transportation to install bear crossing signs along select highways in the western half of the state. The effort was the result of reviewing several years of data to determine the areas with the most bear/vehicle collisions. The first group of signs was installed in Chautauqua and Cattaraugus Counties along I-86, as well as state routes 16 and 219, just north of the Pennsylvania border.



DEC photo

### Youth Turkey Hunt

DEC's annual Youth Wild Turkey Hunt weekend will be held April 23-24, 2011. The weekend gives junior hunters ages 12-15 an opportunity to spend time in the field with experienced adult hunters in pursuit of wild turkeys before the regular turkey season opens. Both adult and junior hunters must have a hunting license and a turkey permit in order



Courtesy of Colleen Dye

## BRIEFLY

to participate. Additionally, adult hunters cannot carry a firearm or longbow, or kill a wild turkey during the youth hunt. Suffolk County will be included for the first time this year. Visit DEC's "Youth Hunt for Wild Turkey" webpage at [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/27836.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/27836.html) for complete details.

### Fun Web Fact

The results are in: the DEC web pages that are visited most frequently by the public are hunting and fishing pages. In addition, the three most common search terms used are "hunting," "fishing" and "lake." Happy web surfing!

### Become a Licensed Outdoor Guide

Interested in becoming a guide for fishing, hunting, camping, hiking, whitewater rafting/canoeing/kayaking, or rock climbing? Then sign up to take a licensed guide examination held at select DEC offices. Examinations are currently scheduled for the following dates in 2011: April 14, May 19, June 30, September 22 and October 20. Detailed information can be found on the licensed guide application form available on DEC's website at [www.dec.ny.gov/permits/30969.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/30969.html).

James Clayton



*New York State Conservationist, April 2011*

Gloria Van Duyne



To many people, the term "urban forestry" sounds contradictory. I've even heard some say, "There aren't any forests in the city." But the city, surrounding suburbs, and small communities are where most people live, and where they experience trees and all they do for us.



Healthy trees produce a variety of benefits that scientists now call "ecosystem services." They take in carbon dioxide, produce oxygen, clean the air, filter water, reduce storm-water runoff, and shade our streets and buildings. They also reduce the need for costly investments in facilities to manage storm water, mitigate air and water pollution, and insulate against temperature extremes. Collectively, city trees comprise an urban forest that can be thought of as a city's green infrastructure.

Urban trees provide other benefits as well. They contribute to "walkable" neighborhoods and livable communities; trees help provide attractive places with a strong sense of place.

Numerous studies show the mental, physical and educational benefits of trees: patients recuperate faster if they can see trees from their window; stress levels are lower in treed environments; children learn better after they spend time outdoors surrounded by green space.

Planting and caring for community trees are wise investments in what is perhaps the only part of a city's infrastructure that actually increases in value over time. So, even though there are fewer trees in cities and towns, in some ways, the services each one provides are even more important!

The tree in front of your apartment, home or office is much more than a decoration. It is a living organism that provides benefits to you by doing what it does naturally—simply by being a tree.

### *What you can do:*

Urban forestry includes care and management of trees and forests to improve the developed environment. You can help New York's urban forests by joining ReLeaf ([www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5307.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5307.html)), a public/private partnership that promotes urban forestry and citizen volunteer involvement. You can also plant a tree, and learn how to care for young trees. To learn more about urban and community forestry, visit DEC's website at [www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4957.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4957.html).

—Gloria Van Duyne